

presstelegram.com

333-Inside City Hall: How will LB use its stimulus?

By Paul Eakins, Staff Writer

Posted: 03/11/2009 09:32:40 PM PDT

Like other cities and states across the country, Long Beach is holding out its hands to get a piece of the federal stimulus package.

That will amount to some serious cash for Long Beach, between \$46million and \$51.7 million initially, Manager of Government Affairs Tom Modica told the City Council on Tuesday. The city also plans to compete for almost \$607 million in other grants, though "competition will be very fierce," Modica said.

Some of the biggest grants the city knows it will receive so far include:

\$16.5 million for Long Beach Transit projects.

\$9.9 million to \$14.7 million for street and road improvements - council members must have been practically salivating over this one, given their later contentious discussion over how to divide up the city's limited street repair funds.

\$6.1 million for work force development programs for youths and adults.

\$3.5 million for homeless prevention.

\$3 million for a lead-based paint hazard control

program that will rehabilitate more than 300 housing units.

\$2 million to \$3 million in energy efficiency grants to retrofit public buildings.

Councilwoman Tonia Reyes Uranga had asked for the report and for council members to set priorities for projects. She said the city should focus on grant-funded projects that, among other things, preserve and create jobs, save at-risk city programs and create green jobs.

"That's what our residents want, they want jobs," Uranga said. "They want to be able to pay their mortgage and pay their rent."

Other council members quickly chimed in on projects they want to prioritize - Councilwoman Rae Gabelich said public safety, Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske called for improvements to fishing lakes, Councilman Patrick O'Donnell mentioned the El Dorado Nature Center and Councilwoman Suja Lowenthal said water quality.

Councilman Dee Andrews, who was supported by Councilman Gary DeLong, said the council shouldn't be too selective.

"I don't want to limit myself to anything," Andrews said. "I think we should ask for everything, and we get what we get."

The council voted unanimously to have city staff return with a list of guidelines for applying for the federal grants and a list of projects to which council members may add others.

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



FormatDynamics®

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

presstelegram.com

Fourth time's the charm

Before council members could discuss stimulus money or anything else Tuesday, Mayor Bob Foster first had to prod them to get the 5 p.m. meeting started.

When City Clerk Larry Herrera called the roll, only Foster and Vice Mayor Val Lerch were in the council chamber. Foster asked him to do it again at 5:08 p.m., and this time Andrews surfaced.

"Members, I'd like to start the meeting approximately on time. Thank you," Foster said into his microphone, trying to draw them out of the council lounge that is connected to the chamber.

On the third roll call, Foster, Lerch and Andrews were joined by Gabelich and Schipske, but the council was still one member short of a quorum.

Finally, as Herrera repeated the members' names a fourth time, almost everyone was accounted for - Lowenthal snuck in a minute later - and the meeting could begin.

Braude endorsements

Of course, one of those seats is permanently empty until a new 1st District council member is elected April 7.

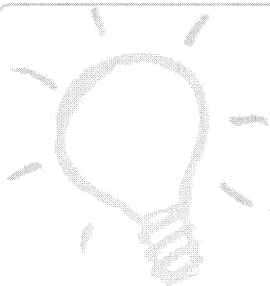
On that note, 1st District candidate Evan Braude, a former councilman, announced this week he has been endorsed by Assembly members Hector De La Torre, whose 50th District includes

Bellflower and South Gate; John Perez, 46th District; Anthony Portantino, 44th District; and Mike Feuer, 42nd District.

Braude faces five opponents in the race for the council seat that was vacated by Bonnie Lowenthal, his domestic partner and political supporter, when she took office in the state Assembly last December.

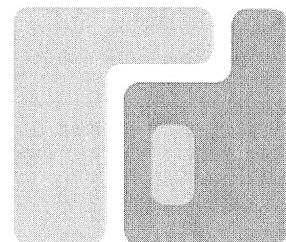
paul.eakins@presstelegram.com , 562-499-1278

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



FormatDynamics®

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™